

2

T W E L V E
R V E S, A N D
V V E A P O N S C O N -
C E R N I N G T H E S P I -
R I T V A L L B A T T E L.

*Together with a briefe exposition vpon the
sixteene Psalmes: With two most worthie Epi-
stles, written in Latin by that most worthy
and noble Gentleman Iohn Picus
Earle of Mirandula.*

And translated into English for the benefite of
all good Christian Souldiers in the
Spirituall battaile.

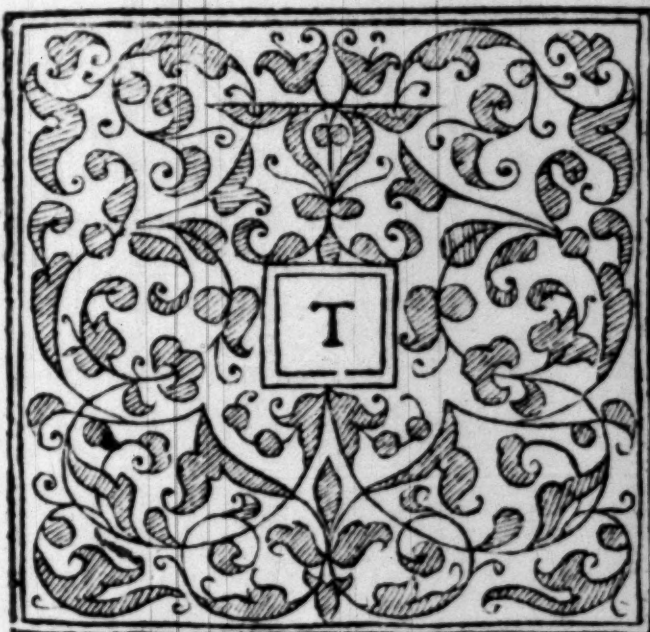


Imprinted at London by Iohn Windet
for Iohn Daldern, and are to be sold
in Canon lane at the signe of
the white horse.

1589.



TO THE RIGHT
WORSHIPFUL, MY VERY
GOOD VNCLE, SIR NICHOLAS
BAGNOLL KNIGHT, KNIGHT MAR-
shall of Ireland, one of her Maiesties coun-
cell of Estate in that Realme.



*That our life is a
fight and battell
vpon the earth,
(my very good
uncle) both the
holy Scriptures,
& our daily ex-
periēce doe teach
vs, but how litle
wee regarde the*

*warre whereunto we are waged, the sacred &
honorable vow and profession of Souldiers
that we haue taken, the noblenes & excellēcie
of the Generall that commaundeth vs, the
iustnes and importance of the quarrell entred
into by vs, the inexplicable reward and tri-
umph*

The Epistle

umph (if we conquere) proposed vnto vs, the might, malice, and pollicie of the forces bent against vs, the endlesse dishonor and ruine that we run into if they doe vanquish vs, the ambushes that to that ende they lay for vs, the stratagems that they vse towards vs, the hote and violent charges that they geue vs, the volue of mischiefes that they discharge at vs, the defection that they practise in vs, the battery that they plāt against vs, the breach that they make in the innermost houlde of vs, and the fierce and furious assaults wherewith they assaile vs, their ample and often conquestes, & our most miserable captiuities do too too much testifie. From the which, though dayly raunsoomed by the bountie of our Generall, to allure vs to more value and vigilancie: wee vngatefull, and vngratious, to our perpetuall shame (if we amend not) become more dastardlie and secure. Whereof foure causes proceeding from one Fountaine (the wante of Gods grace) may me thinkes be aptly produced.

The first, ignorance of the warre, and enemies that doe encounter vs. The second, defect of fortitude & resolution in the function
vnder-

Dedicatorie.

undertaken by vs. Thirdly, the lack of armour and weapon, and other necessities that should furnish vs. Fourthly, the want of martiall skill and discipline, that in any part and action of our seruice should direct vs.

For the first, we ought to consider that there are three mightie camps enuironing of vs: the flesh, the world, and the infernall forces, for we fight not onely against flesh and bloud, but also against principalities, against powers against the worldly gouerners, the princes of the darkenes of this world, and against spirituall wickednesse which are in the high places. These, under Sathan their soueraigne, whose kingdome is calamitie, whose scepter is sinne, whose lawes are lies, whose triumphe is torments, whose wages to his souldiers is eternall woe, and curtesie to his captiues is endlesse death and destruction: doe warre with vs in foure seuerall places. First generally, against our head and hole armie: then particularly, against the legion and Phalange wherein wee are inrolled: next peculiarly, against the statio which we are appointed vnto: lastly, they rayse ciuill warres in our selues. Our Sauour and soueraigne Christ Jesus (whose kingdome

The Epistle

is euerlasting blisse, whose scepter is righteousnesse, whose law is trueth, whose triumphe is glorie, whose wages is celestiallyoy, and whose mercie to his elect is eternall life and saluation) hath himselfe in person encountred with these our enemies, and breaking their force & strength to the r confusion and ou rthrowe, hath after his most royall and blessed victory, ascended into the Capitoll, and triumphant part of his kingdome, the heauenly and celestially Hierusalem: leauing vs such directions, as if we follow, we shall also become through him, victorious, and so accompanie him euerlastingly in his triumph. In the meane time (as it is laide downe by the Cronicler of this conquest, S. Iohn Reuel. Cap. 12.) The dragon in his rage and furie, preuayling neither against the head, nor against the whole bodie of this armie, the better part whereof (now in triūph with their Generall) is out of gunshot, pursueth his malice against the remnant of the host which keepe the commaundements of God, and haue the testimonie of Iesus Christ. These he assayleth first in a generalitie, euen the whole Militant Church, for whose good estate wee ought to labour and striue in praiers and sup-
pli-

Dedicatorie.

plications vnto God, & both defend and enlarge the boundes thereof to our vttermost power. Next, with force and fraude, by himselfe, and his instruments, his vicar generall, Antichrist, and his deluded kings and potentates: he attempteth the ouerthrow of euery principall part and phalange of her most excellent maiestie, and her dominions, her highnes being in the same the Lords lieutenant, in whose most blessed gouernment and legions most conspicuous we are enrolled: wherein we ought with all care, fortitude, and industry, to resist both his practises secreete, and his open hostilitie. Thirdly, in the station appointed vs, and functiō that we are called vnto, he stirreth troubles to afflict vs, enuy and malice to spight vs, detraction and slaunders to annoy vs, perils to enuiron vs, the flesh to puffle, and yet to pine vs, the world to allure, and yet to abhorre vs: troubles we must overcome with patience, enuy and malice with vertue, perils with magnanimitie, the flesh with the spirite, the thornes and nettles of this world with the lillies and roses of the future, & the hatred of men with the loue of God. Lastly, he worketh a rebellion in our selues, stirring vp the vices and corruptions of the first Adam.

The Epistle

Adam, of whom we are borne in the flesh, whose workes are adulterie, fornication, vncleannes, wantonnes, couetousnes, idolatrie, witchcraft, hatred, debate, emulations, wrath, contentions, seditions, heresies, enuy, murders, drunkennes, gluttony, and such like: against the vertues and perfections of the second Adam, of whom wee are regenerated in the spirite: whose fruite is loue, ioy, peace, long suffering, gentlenes, goodness, faith, meekenes, and temperancie. He besiegeth vs from without with an army of temptations, vnder the banner of worldly vanitie: and assaulteth vs within with our owne scanes, vnder the ensigne of fleshly frailty. Against these villaines let vs redouble our vigor with indignation, and slaying them with the sword of the spirite, let vs sally out and discomfite vnder the standard of our Soueraigne, both the worlde and the deuili, and all their complices: let vs herein shew our selues resolute, vertuous, and valiant, and say with the Spaniard, No virtud sino vencer, no verdadera gloria sino victoria. There is no vertue but in vanquishing, there is no true glory but in victorie. Let vs labor to be endued with perfect fortitude, let vs consider that it becommes not a noble
and

Dedicatorie.

and generous minde to ground his value either vpon hope of gaine, for that is marchant-like and mercenarie: or vpon feare of punishment, for that is abiect and compulsarie: or vpon perswasion of aduantage for that is fox like and subtill: or vpon rankor and rage, for that is diuclish and passionate: or vpon foole hardines and temeritie, for that is inconsiderate and sencelesse: but vpon discharge of dutie, loue of vertue, iustice of the quarrel, dignitie of the generall, and honor of the conquest. Let vs propose euen before our eyes the exquisite skill, the singular vertue, the ineffable authoritie, and the felicitie inexplicable of our king and soueraigne Christ Iesus. Let vs study to learne the first, to imitate the second, to depend vpon the third, so shall we participate of the fourth. Let vs take vnto vs the whole armour of God, let our loynes be girded about with verity, let vs put on the brestplate of righteousness, let our feet be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace: aboue all let vs take the shielde of faith (which is Christ Iesus by faith apprehended) wherewith wee may quench all the fierie dartes of the wicked. Let vs take the helmet of saluation, and the sworde of the

B

spi-

The Epistle

spirite, which is the word of God. Let vs pray alwayes with all maner prayers and supplication in the spirite, and watch thereunto with all perseuerance.

Scipio Affricanus, as we reade in Liuius, for the better trayning of his Souldiers, prescribed them the first day to runne certayne myles armed, the second before their Tent doores to trimme and dresse their furniture, the third day to exercise them selues in a fayned velitation and skirmish one with the other, the fourth day to rest, the fift day to returne to the first dayes practise: and thus to continue while they had leysure from true battels and conflicts.

But sith this spirituall warfare is continuall, we may neuer lay off our armour, but must (like expert Souldyars) make it as fam:liar vnto vs as our skinne, especially sith it is of that necessity, that we cannot conquere without it, and of that mettall that it wil rust with no wether, & of that nature that it wil wax the brighter the more that we weare it: We shall neede no counterfet skirmishes, that are euer present with serious combats, wherein to winne is not wearisome, but to lose is laborious: the one carrying with it solace, the other sorrowe. Let vs learne carefully, and ob-

Dedicatorie.

observe faithfully, the directions given vs by our Generall, for his doctrine is our discipline. Let vs carry alwaies in minde his cohortation, which is the whetstone of martiall vigor. Let vs imitate his example, who is the perfect patterne of all goodnesse and vertue. Let vs be allured by the exploits of famous Souldiers that haue beene before vs. Let vs follow their course, their counsell, their comfort, in this spiritual fight, wherein among many I greatly commend the instructions and practise of that most rare, learned, vertuous and noble Gentleman, Iohn Picus, Earle of Mirandula, whose aduice herein so well pleaseth me, that I thought good to communicate it to my friends, and to dedicate it vnto you (my very good vncle) together with a brieve exposition of his vpon the sixteene Psalme, with two Epistles vnto his Nephew, a most honourable, vertuous and learned Prince Iohannes Franciscus Picus, Earl of Mirandula, and Prince of Concordia: which I present vnto you as the fruytes of mine idle houres, which being not many, their labour can be neither great nor exquisite. It resteth that I recommend you to his most blessed tuition that

The Epistle

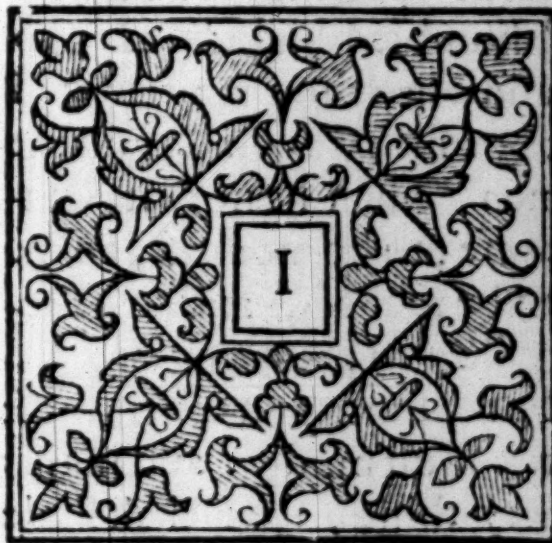
*bath hetherto led you a long and honourable
race thorow the warfare, both secular and spi-
rituall: ioyning with you in most feruent
prayers to his diuine Maiestie, to establishe
your trauayles in the one throughout all poste-
rity: and your triumphs in the other, tho-
rowout all eternitie. From the castle
of the Iland, this tenth of
December. 1588.*

Your louing Nephew

W. H.



TWELVE RULES, OF IOHN PICUS Earle of Mirandula, partly stirring vp, partly directing man in the spirituall battaile.



IF THE WAY OF vertue seeme hard vnto man because wee must continually fight against the flesh, the deuill, and the world, let him remember that what way soeuer hee shall choose, (yea if it be according to the world) hee must suffer much aduersitie,

sorrow, discommoditie and trauaile.

Let him remember that in thinges of this world, the fight is longer, painfuller, & vnprofitabler; wherein labor is the ende of labor, and the last is eternall paine.

Let him remember that it is a foolish thing to beleeue that any is able to goe to heauen, vnlesse it be through this battell, euen as our head Christ ascended not into heauen but by his croisse, neither ought the state of the seruant to be better then the state of his Lord and master.

Let him remember that this battell is not onely to be endured, but also to be desired, although thereby we receiue no reward, onely to be conformed to Christ our God and Lord, & as often as thou striuest against

against any of thy senses by resisting any temptatiō, marke to what part of the crosse of Christ thou art to be conformed: as when thou, resisting gluttonie, annoyest thy taste, remember that he dranke vinager mingled with gall: when as thou keepest thy handes from any rapine which liketh thee, remember that his hands were fast nayled to the crosse for thee: and if thou resistest pride, remember that when he was in the forme of God, he tooke vpon him for thee the forme of a seruant, and humbled himselfe euen to the death of the crosse: and when thou art tempted of anger, remember that he which was God, and the most righteous among men, when he notwithstanding, saw himselfe as a theefe, to be mocked, to be spitted on, to be beaten, to be reuiled, and to be reputed with theeues, yet he shewed at no time any token of anger or grudge, but enduring all things most patiently, replied to all men most mildly: and in this wise running thorow euery thing, thou shalt finde that there is no passion but shall make thee conformable to Christ in some sort.

That thou trust not in these twelue weapons in any worldly remedie whatsoeuer, but onely in the power of Iesus Christ, which hath said, Be of good chere I haue overcome the world. And in another place, The Prince of this world is cast out: wherefore we also by his onely power doe trust that we are able both to vanquish the world, and to overcome the deuill, therefore wee ought alwayes by prayer to seeke his helpe.

Remember that when thou hast overcome one temptation, then another is alwayes to be expected, for that the deuill alwayes goeth about seeking whō he may deuoure: wherefore it behooueth vs alwayes to be readie and regardfull, and to say with the Prophet:

phet: I will alwayes stand vpon my watch.

That thou not onely be not overcome of the deuill, but that thou also overcome him when he tempteth thee: and this is, when thou doest not onely not offend, but also takest an occasion to doe some good by that thing wherein he tempteth thee: as if his work offereth thee any good, that thereby thou fall into vaine glorie, thou forthwith considering it, not as thy worke, but as a benefite of God, doest humble thy selfe, and iudge thy selfe to be too little thankful vnto God for his benefites.

That when thou doest fight, thou mayst fight as though thou wert conquering, and thereby to haue euermore quietnes, for that happily God of his grace wil geue this vnto thee, and the deuill shall returne no more dismayd by reason of thy victorie: and when thou hast overcome, liue as though thou were presently to fight, that in battell thou bee alwaies mindfull of victorie, and in victorie alwaies mindfull of battaile.

That although thou finde thy selfe in euery point well strengthened and prouided, yet notwithstanding thou shun alwaies the occasions of offence, because, the wise man saith, he that loueth danger, shal perish therein.

That in temptations thou be alwaies ready to resist the beginnings, and to dash the babes of Babylon against the rock. The rock is Christ: for too late is the medicine prouided, if the euill be too farre gone.

Remember that albeit in the very conflict of temptation, the fight seeme sharpe and difficult, notwithstanding it is farre sweeter to overcome, than to run into sinne. Wherefore dispose thy selfe to the victory. And in this many are deceiued, because they compare not the sweetenes of the victorie to the sweetnes of
of

of sinne, but they compare the sharpnes of the battel to the sweetnes of pleasure: and yet notwithstanding man which hath a thousand times experienced what it is to yeelde to temptation, ought once at the least to try what it is to ouercome temptation.

Beleeue not because thou art tempted, that God hath forsaken thee, or lesse regardeth thee, or accompteth thee the lesse righteous and perfect. Remember that Paul after he saw the diuine essence, suffered the temptation of the flesh, wherewith God permitted him to be tempted, lest he should be tempted of pride. Wherein man ought to consider, that Paul which was an elect vessell, and taken vp euen to the third heauen, yet he was tried, lest he should glory in himselfe, as he testifieth of himselfe, lest the abundance of reuelations should exalt me, there was given vnto me a pricke in the flesh to buffet me. Wherefore aboue all temptations, man principally ought to arme himselfe against the temptation of pride, for that it is the roote of all mischiefe, against the which there is one onely remedy, alwaies to remember that God humbled himselfe for vs, euen vnto the death of the crosse, and death wil humble vs, though against our willes, to be euen meate for wormes.

*Twelve weapons of Iohn Picus, Earle of Mirandula,
for the spirituall battel, which man alwaies
ought to haue in a readines, when
the desire of sinne tempteth him.*

- 1 Of sinne, the pleasure short and small.
- 2 The companions, both somnes and anxietie.
- 3 Losse of a greater good.
- 4 Life, a sleepe and a shadowe.
- 5 Death,

- 5 Death, at hand, and sodaine.
- 6 The dout of impenitencie.
- 7 Eternall reward: eternall paine.
- 8 The dignitie and nature of man.
- 9 The peace of a good minde.
- 10 The benefites of God.
- 11 The crosse of Christ.
- 12 The testimonie of martyres, and the example of holy men.

*Twelve conditions of a lover, by Iohn Picus
of Mirandula.*

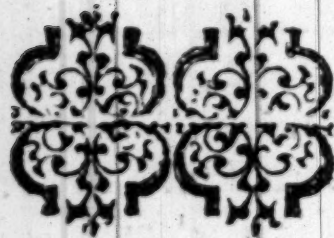
- 1 To loue one onely, and to despise all things for him
- 2 To thinke him vnhappie which is not with his beloued.
- 3 To suffer all things, yea death to be with him.
- 4 To adorne himselfe to please him.
- 5 To be with him in all sortes we may, if not in body, at least wise in minde.
- 6 To loue all things that please him, his precepts, his counsell, his doctrine.
- 7 To seeke his praise, and not to suffer any reproach of him.
- 8 To beleue the best of him in all thinges, desiring all men so to beleue.
- 9 To be willing to suffer any discommoditie for his sake, taking it in very good part.
- 10 To shed teares with him often, either for griefe if he be absent, or for ioy if he be present.
- 11 To languish often, and often to be enflamed with his loue.
- 12 To obey him, thinking nothing of reward or recompence.

C

We

We are accustomed to be induced to this chieflie for three causes. The first is, when the seruice is such as of it selfe it is to be desired. The second, when as he whom we obey, is of himselfe very good and amiable, that we euen loue and reuerence him for his vertues. The third is, when he, before we did beginne to serue him, hath bestowed many great benefites vpon vs, and these three are in God, because for his seruice there is no trauaile taken which is not good for vs, both for our soule and body: for that to obey him, is no other thing then to direct our selues vnto him that is the chiefest God. He is also the best, comliest and wisest, hauing all conditions accustomedly mouing vs to loue, and to obey freely: which most beneficially hath dealt with vs, in creating vs of nothing, and redeeming vs from hell by the blood of his sonne when wee were worse then nothing.

THE



19
THE COMMENTA-

*rie of Iohn Picus Mirandula, vpon
the sixteene Psalme,*

Psal. 16. *Preserue me O God.*



F any man being perfect, will call in account his estate, hee must take heede of this, that hee boast not himselfe. Dauid therefore, speaking in the person of the iust man, beginneth of his state in this word: Preserue me. Which rightly considered, taketh away all occasion of pride: for hee which can attaine to any thing of him selfe, can also of himselfe preserue that thing for himselfe. Hee therefore which desireth of God to be kept in the state of vertue, signifieth by this that from the beginning he got not that vertue of himselfe. And hee which recordeth that he hath obteyned vertue not by his owne power, but by the power of God, cannot exalt himselfe of it: but the more humble himselfe before God, according to that of the Apostle, What hast thou that thou hast not receiued: and if thou hast receiued it, why boastest thou as though thou receiuedst it not? There are two wordes which wee ought alwaies to haue in our mouth. The one, haue mercie vpon me O God, when that we remember our badnes. The other, preserue me O God, when we call to minde his goodnes.

For I haue trusted in thee.

This is one thing that causeth vs to obteyne of God that which we desire: that is, whē we haue a sure hope to obteyne. And if we obserue these two points,

that we neuer desire of God but those things which are for our good, and that wee earnestly aske that thing we desire, not doubting but that God heareth vs, our prayers shall neuer be in vainē. Therefore when we obtaine not, it is either for that it is hurtfull for vs, for we know not what to ask, according to Christs saying: And Iesus saith, Whatsoever ye shall aske in my name it shalbe geuen vnto you for this name Iesus doeth signifie a Sauour, and therefore nothing is asked in his name, but it is to the sauing health of him that asketh, or because wee are not harde, for that in asking good things, we aske not them as wee ought, but wauering in hope, and he whose hope is doubtful hath a colde petition: therefore saith Iames, Let him aske in faith, doubting nothing.

*I haue sayd vnto the Lord, thou
art my God.*

After he armeth himselfe against pride, he beginneth to describe his estate. The whole state of a good man consisteth in this word: I haue sayd to the Lord, thou art my God. The which word although it seemeth almost common among all men, yet fewe there are which can truely say it. Euery man hath that for his God which he counteth for chiefest good, which onely had, we thinke our selues happy: if all other thinges are wanting, and if that one thing be wanting, yea if we haue all things els that are good, wee thinke our selues vnhappy. The couetous man therefore saith vnto his money, thou art my God: for if he want honor, health, vertue and friendes, so hee hath money he is content: and if hee haue all those good things which we haue rehearsed and want money, he thinketh himselfe a wretch. The glutton also saith to
his

his bellie: the incontinent to his lust: the ambitious to superioritie and glorie: Thou art my God. See therefore how few there be which can say, I haue said vnto the Lord, thou art my God. He onely can doe this, whom God onely doeth suffice: so that if all the kingdomes of the world, and all heavenly and earthly things were set before him, yea to offend his God but once, he would not take them. In this word therefore consisteth the whole state of a righteous man.

For thou standest not in neede of my goods.

He yealdeth a reason wherefore hee saith onely to the Lord, thou art my God. The reason is, for that onely God hath no neede of our goods, for there is no creature which wanteth not the help of other creatures, farre more imperfect then it selfe, as Philosophers and Diuines affirme, because if one had not beene, the other had not beene, for confounde part of that which is called vniuersall, and confounde the whole. The whole being confounded, all the parts are confounded. All creatures are part of one vniuersall, of the which God himselfe is no part, but the beginning, nothing depending vpon it, for God hath got nothing by the creation of the world, neither should he lose any thing if the whole world were brought to nought. Therefore God alone hath no neede of our goods. We ought therefore to take shame to account him for God which standeth in neede of vs, such is euery creature. Furthermore, we ought not to account for God, that is, for the chiefest good, but that wherein is the chiefest good, but in no creature is the chiefest good, therefore wee ought onely to say vnto the Lord, Thou art my God.

But to the saints that are in the earth.

Next vnto God wee ought to loue those most which are most neare vnto God: such are the angels, and the blessed in the celestiall Ierusalem, our lande, kingdome and countrey. Therefore after he said vnto the Lord, thou art my God, he addeth.

He hath made wonderfull his pleasure.

That is, he hath made his loue woonderfull, and his good will toward the Saints which are in his land, that is, in the celestiall countrey, which is called the land of God, and the land of the liuing. And if wee truelie consider what great felicitie his Countrey yealdeth, and what great misery this world bringeth, and the great goodnes and excellencie of those Citizens, we shall alwayes desire to part from hence, to be dwelling there. These and such like when we meditate vpon, wee ought alwayes to prouide that our meditations become not vnprofitable. For we ought of euery meditation to reape some fruite: as for an example, when we enter into meditation of that heauenly Countrey, we ought to get this benefite thereby, not onely to be strong to suffer death, and patient when by course of nature the houre shall come, or if it be before to be suffered for the faith of Christ, but also to wish it willingly, desiring to part hence from this vale of miserie, and so to raigne in that blessed land with God and his Saints. When therefore, the iust man hath described his state, which is wholly in affection toward God, and things pertayning to his diuine maiestie, hee also from his heart despiseth the state of wicked men, and saith:

Their

Their infirmities are multiplied.

By infirmities he vnderstandeth Idols, and so hath the Hebrew text: for euen as a good man hath one God whom he loueth and reuerenceth: so bad and wicked men haue many gods and Idols, and because there are many pleasures, many desires, diuers passions which they obey, they therefore seeke diuers pleasures, because no one sufficeth them. The wicked therefore wander about: and hee addeth, they made haste after, that is, after their desires: they headlong and inconsiderately fell: whereby we are taught that we make no lesse speede to vertue, then they doe to vice: neither with lesse diligence serue and obey our God, then they their Lord the deuill. The iust man considering the state of wicked men, doeth assuredly purpose, as we alwayes ought to doe, neuer to folow their waies, and saith:

*I wil make no account of their bloudy sacrifices,
neither wil I make mention of them within my lips.*

Hee speaketh of blood, as well for that Idolaters were accustomed, hauing gathered the blood of their sacrifices, to exercise therewith their ceremonies, as also for that the whole life of the wicked (the right vse of reason being left) followeth sensualitie, which consisteth in blood. He hath said that he will not only not doe sacrifice vnto Idols, but also not name them, (which onely without offence can be sayd and done:) shewing by this, that a perfect man ought not onely to abstaine from vnlawfull pleasures, but also from those which are lawfull: that his minde may the rather be settled in heauen, and geuen more purely to the

the contemplation of heavenly things, and lest that any should deeme it meere folly to deprive himself of all pleasure, he addeth.

The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance.

As if he had said, maruell not if I forgoe all other things to enioy God, in whom all other good things are enioyed. These ought to be the words of euerie Christian: The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance. Because we Christians to whom God is promised for an inheritance, ought to be ashamed to desire any thing beside him: and least that it should seeme presumption to any to assure this vnto himselfe, he addeth the same.

Thou art he which doest geue me mine inheritance.

As if he had said, O Lord my God, I know well that I am nothing in respect of thee, by mine owne endeouours I am not able to ascend to enioy thee, but thou art he which doest draw me vnto thee through thy grace, and thou art he which geuest thy selfe to me to be inherited. Let the iust man then consider how great is this felicitie, that God shalbe his inheritance. He addeth.

The lots haue fallen to me in goodly places.

For euery mans part and portion of old time, was deuided by lottes: And because there are many which although they are called to this felicitie, as are all Christians, yet notwithstanding they make no account of it, so that oftentimes for a little light pleasure

sure they change it. He addeth the same.

My heritage is excellent unto me.

As if he had said, euen as that heritage is excellent, so doe I esteeme it exceeding well, and doe repute all other things in respect of it, according to the saying of Paule, but very dong: but because to haue this light of vnderstanding, that man may know this felicitie is a gift geuen from God, he therefore addeth.

*I will thanke the Lord for geuing
me to vnderstand.*

For because man oftentimes purposeth to serue God according to humane reason, when sensualitie and the flesh repugne. But that man is perfect that hath not only his soule, but also his flesh enclined vnto God, according to that saying: My heart and my flesh haue reioyced in the liuing God. Therefore hee addeth.

*My reynes also chasten me in the
night season.*

That is, the very reynes themselves, wherein is accustomed the greatest inclination to concupiscence, doe not moue me to euil, but rather rebuke and chasten me: that is, they withhold me in the night season, insomuch that they tame and scourge the very body. Then he sheweth the cause, and saith,

I set the Lord alwaies in my sight.

For if any man haue God alwaies before his eies,

D

for

for a rule of all his works: and in all his works he seeketh not his owne commoditie, nor glory, nor pleasure, but onely to please God: he shall in short time become a perfect man: and because he so doeth in al his affaires, he shall alwaies prosper. Therefore he saith.

*He is on my right hand that I can
not be moued.*

Hee sheweth how that the felicitie of a iust man is great, because he shalbe for euer happie both in soule and body: and therefore he addeth.

My heart is mery.

That is to say, my soule is merrie: knowing after death heauen to be prepared for him.

And my flesh shall rest in hope.

That is, although it reioyceth not, as if it were out of hand after death to receiue his state, yet notwithstanding, it resteth in the graue with this hope, that it shall rise in the day of iudgement, together with his soule, immortall and most glorious, and this he declareth in the verse following, for because he said his heart was merry, he geueth a reason,

Because he shall not leaue my soule in hell.

And because that hee said his flesh rested in hope, he yealdeth a reason, saying.

*Neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to
see corruption.*

Because

Because that which was corruptible shall rise incorruptible, and because Christ was the first which entered into Paradise, and made the way for vs, and was the first which rose, and his resurrection is the cause of our resurrection: therefore these things which wee haue spoken of are principallie to be vnderstoode of the resurrection of Christ, as Peter the Apostle declareth. And secondly, they are to be vnderstoode of vs, in as much as we are members of Christ which onely saw no corruption, because his body was not putrified in the graue. Therefore, because the way of well liuing leadeth vs into perpetuall life both of soule and bodie. He therefore addeth,

*Thou hast made the wayes of life known
vnto me.*

And because the whole felicitie of this life consisteth in the true vision and fruition of God, he therefore addeth.

*Thou shalt fill me with the ioy of thy
countenance.*

And because the felicitie shall endure for euer, he therefore addeth:

At thy right hand are pleasures for euermore.

He saith, at thy right hand, because our felicitie is compleated in the sight and enioying of Christes humanitie, which sitteth at the right hand of the maiestie of God on high, according to that of Iohn. This is our ful reward, to see God, and him whom he hath sent, Iesus Christ.



TO HIS NEPHEW,
Iohn Franciscus, Iohn Picus Earl
of Mirandula, *wisheth health in him*
which is the true health.



Aruaile not my Sonne,
neither take any grieſe,
or diſmaye, that vpon
thy departure from me,
there are ſo many occa-
ſions of euill miniſtered
vnto thee, which may
diſquiet thee, and with-
ſtande thy determined
purpose of good life:
how greate a myracle

ſhould it be rather, if to thee alone amongſt mortall
men, the way to heauen were made plaine and eaſie,
without labour and toyle, as though there were no
deceitful world nor wicked deuill, or as though thou
were not yet in the fleſh, which luſteth againſt the
ſpirite, and maketh vs of men monſters: vnleſſe wee
ſhall looke well to our ſelues: but rather reioyce, as
S. Iames counſelleth thee, ſaying, *Reioyce my brethren*
when yee ſhall fall into diuers temptations. Nor without
good cauſe, for what hope is there of glory, when
there wanteth hope of victorie: and what victory can
there

there be when there is no fight. Hee is lured to the crowne, that is allured to the combat, and especially to such wherein no man can be ouercome, if hee will not himselfe: neither neede we any mans help to conquere, but onely his, which geueth vs both mind and might to ouercome. It is great felicitie to a Christian, to consider that the victorie consisteth by the goodnes of God in his owne will, and the rewardes thereof farre greater then either his wish or worthinesse possible may be. Tell me (my deare Sonne) is there any thing in this life, of these things, whose desire troubleth earthly mindes, that can bee attained without labor, or not enduring many indignities and miseries. The merchant thinketh it well with him, if after many nauigations, many thousand discommodities, thousand perils of life, he get some gayne. It needeth not that I write vnto thee as touching the warfare of this world, whose miseries experience it selfe hath and doeth sufficiently teach thee. What heapes of griefes, what great anxietie, how much carefulnes there is in obteyning the fauour of Princes, in purchasing the friendship of our equals, in compassing of honors, I am rather for to learne of thee, then to teach thee: who contenting my selfe and meane leifure with my bookes, haue learned from my very youth to liue within my bounds. These therefore earthly, transitorie, vncertaine and vile things, common also to vs with brute beasts, shall we with paine and panting scarcely attaine: and shall we be drawn as if we were drouisie and sleepey, and as it were against our will vnto heauenly and diuine things, the which eye hath not seene, nor the eare heard, as if without vs the Lord could not raigne, neither those heauenlie Citizens be euer blessed. Truly, if this earthly felicity might be got with ease, a man might (shunning labour)

bour)like better to serue the world then God . But if we are nothing the lesse , yea much more then in the way of God wearied in the way of sinners (whereof is that saying of the damned, we are tyred in the way of iniquitie) it cannot be but extreame madnes to bee more vnwilling to labour where reward is rendered, then where for our labor punishment is ordeyned. I omitte to shew how great the peace and felicitie of the mind is to know it selfe cleere in conscience, free from fault: the which doubtlesse is farre more to bee esteemed then all the pleasures that may be enioyed or wished in this life: what is worthy the wishing for in these worldly pleasures, which, while they are a seeking, they defatigate: and being obteyned, doe infatuate: & being lost, doe excruciate. Doubtest thou, my sonne, that the mindes of the wicked are not tossed with cōtinual care, it is the word of God, which cannot be deceiued nor deceiue: the hart of the wicked is as it were the raging sea that taketh no rest, for there is nothing vnto the safe, nothing peaceable: all things import vnto them feare, care, death: shall we therefore enuie these? shall we haue these in emulation, and forgetting our proper dignitie, our countrey, and our heavenly father, shall we, when as we are borne free, become their slaues and bondmen, that liuing together with them miserably, dying more miserably, at length in eternal fire we may be tormented most miserably? O the blinde mindes and hearts of men! who is he that seeth not trueth it selfe, yet neuerthelesse leaue we vndone the things which we know are to be done. Doubt not my sonne, but especially in those places wherein thou remaynest, innumerable impediments will beset thee, and driue thee if it were possible, from thy purpose of liuing a holy and godly life, and fling thee downe headlong if thou takest not
 very

very good heede: but among the rest, it is a deadlie plague day and night to be conuersant among those, whose life is not onely in euery parte an enticement to sinne, but wholly set and placed vnder the Emperor the deuill, vnder the stander of death, vnder the salarie of hell, in expugnation of vertue, fighteth against heauen, against the Lord, & against his Christ. But crie thou out with the Prophet, *Let vs breake their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from vs.* For these are they whom the Lord hath deliuered vp into their hearts lust, and into a reprobate sence, to doe those things which are not conuenient, being full of all vn-righteousnes, fornication, wickednes, couetousnes, maliciousnes, full of enuie, of murder, of debate, of deceite, taking all things in the euill part, whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, doers of wrong, proude boasters, inuenters of euil things, without vnderstanding, ill natured, without naturall affection, without faithfulness, without mercie. Which men when they dayly saw the righteousness of God, yet notwithstanding, they vnderstoode not how that they which doe those things are worthy of death, not only those that doe them, but also they which doe fauor such as doe them. Please not thou therefore, my sonne, whom vertue displeaseth, but let that saying of the Apostle be alwaies before thine eyes, *It behooueth vs to please God rather then man.* And also that of the Apostle: *If I should studie to please men, I should not then be the seruant of God.* Let a certaine kinde of godly ambition inuade thee, and vouchsafe not them worthie to be masters of thy life, who were fitter to be thy schollers: For it is farre decenter that they begin to be men by liuing well with thee, then that thou omitting thy good purpose, shouldest become a beast by liuing ill with them. There holdeth me (I take God to witnes) some-
times

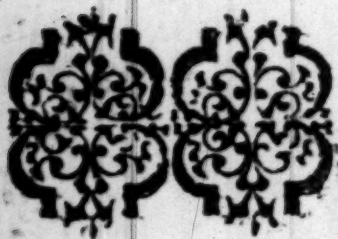
times as it were an extasie, and a certaine kinde of astonishment, when I begin, I know not whether rather to thinke vpon, or to be sory for, to admire or to deplore the studies of men: (or to speake more plainly) their meere madnes. For truely it is meere madnes not to beleue the Gospell: the trueth whereof the bloud of Martyrs crieth, the voice of the Apostles foundeth, miracles proueth, reason confirmeth, the world witnesseth, the elements shew, the deuils confesse. But it is farre greater madnes if thou doest not doubt of the trueth of the Gospell, to liue notwithstanding, as though thou doubtedst nothing of the falsenes thereof. For if those words be true, that it is most harde for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heauen, why doe we then daily busie our selues in heaping vp riches: and if it bee true, that the glorie which is not of man but of God is to be sought, why doe we then alwayes hang & depend vpon the iudgements of men. There is no man that careth to please God, & if we stedfastly beleue that the time wil come when the Lord shall say, *Goe ye cursed into everlasting fire, and againe, Come ye blessed, and possesse the Kingdome prepared for you from the beginning of the world.* Why doe we the eithere feare nothing lesse then hel, or hope for nothing lesse then heauen: what els can be said, but that there be many Christians in name, but very fewe in deede. Striue thou, my sonne, to enter in by the narrow gate, and geue not heede to that which many men doe, but to that which ought for to be done, the which the law of nature, reason, and God him selfe will shew thee. For thy glorie shall not be the lesse, if thou be happie, with a fewe, nor thy punishment the lighter if thou bee miserable with many. There are two most principal present remedies for thee against the world and the deuill, with the which, as with two wings,

wings thou shalt flye vp on high from the valley of teares, that is to say, almes and prayer: for what can we doe without the helpe of God: or how shall hee helpe being not called vpon. And moreouer, he will not heare thee calling vpon him, which hast not first heard the poore calling vpon thee. For it is not vnmeet that God despise thee, being a mā, who being a man, hast despised a man. It is written, *With what measure ye meate, shall other men measure to you againe.* And elsewhere, *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtaine mercie.* But when I inuite thee to prayer, I doe not inuite thee to that which consisteth in much babbling: but to that which speaketh to God within the secreete closet of the minde, in the priuie chamber of the hart, with affection most earnest, and in the most bright clowde of contemplation, doeth not onely present the minde vnto God, but it doeth by certaine ineffable meanes vnite it fast, which the experienced onely know. Neither doe I waigh how long thy prayer be, but how effectuell and how earnest it be, interlaced rather with sighes, then poured out with a continuall order and number of words. If thou regardest thy saluation or wilt be free from the snares of the deuill, from the stormes of the world, from the ambushes of thy enemies, if thou desirest to be accepted of God, and so at length to become happie, see that no daye passe wherein once, at the least, thou makest not thy prayers vnto God, and prostrating thy selfe with the humble affection of a godly minde, criest not out with the Prophet, not outwardly from thy lips, but inwardly from thy heart: *Remember not the offences and ignorances of my youth, but according to thy mercie, for thy goodnes sake, remember me O Lord.* The spirite shall teach thee, which maketh request for vs, and also necessitie euery houre what thou shalt aske of God, sacred rea-

ding shall also helpe, which I pray thee most earnestly vse, setting aside the vaine fables and triflinges of Poets. There is nothing more acceptable with God, nothing more profitable for thy selfe, as day & night to haue in hand the holy Scripture. In it there is a certaine celestiall and heavenly power, liuely & effectual, which doeth transforme the minde of the Reader, so that he vse it purely & humbly, into a diuine & godly loue, by a most wonderfull vertue. But I haue now exceeded the limits of an Epistle, the matter and the affection drawing me therto, which I haue alwaies had toward thee: especially from that houre wherein I was first certified of thy most godly purpose. Lastly, I will admonish thee of that which when thou wast with me I haue often spoken of to thee: that is, that thou neuer forget these two thinges: the sonne of God to haue died for thee, and that thou (though thou liue long) art shortly to die. With these two, as it were with two spurres, the one of feare, the other of loue, driue thy horse through the short race of this momentary life, vnto the goale of eternall felicitie, when as we neither ought, nor can prefixe any other ende vnto our selues, as then to enioy in both body and soule, perpetuall peace without end: by the infinite goodnes of him which is both God and man, Christ Iesus. Farewell.

Feare God.

John.



*John Picus Earle of Mirandula, wisheth
health to Iohn Franciscus his Nephew.*



Hou art happy, my sonne, when as G O D hath not onely geuen thee grace to lyue well, but by liuing well in the meane time to heare ill at wicked mens hands, specially because thou liuest well. It is an equall praise by the commendable to be commended, and to be condemned of the condemnable. But I therefore account thee not happie in that this reproache is glorious vnto thee, but because our Lord Iesus Christ is true: yea trueth it selfe affirmeth, that our reward shalbe abundant in heauen, when men shall speake euill of vs, and shall falsly say all maner of euill saying against vs for his names sake. This is an Apostolicall dignity, to be accounted worthie to suffer reproch for the gospels sake. We reade in Luke, that the Apostles went out reioysing from the sight of the counsell, because they were thought worthie to sustain and endure reproch and contumelie for the name of Iesus. Let vs therefore reioice if that wee are accounted worthie with God, so great glorie as to haue his glorie manifested by our ignominie, and if we sustaine any thing hard or troublesome of the world, let that most sweete voice of the Lord cōfort vs, *If the world hate you, knowe ye that it hated me before you.* If the world hated him by whom it was made, shall we most vile men (and if we consider our wickednes, most worthie all reproches) if any detract or speake euill, take it grieuously, and to stop the wicked tongue, shall wee beginne to liue wickedly? Let vs therefore rather content our selues ioyfully with their bad reports, and if our felicity be not such: for vertue sake, & for true h to suffer stripes, bonds, prisonmēt, sword, as our nobles and worthies

haue done before vs . Yet let vs thinke it goeth well with vs, if we suffer reproches, backbitings and hatred of wicked men , lest that all occasion of good endeuors being taken from vs , there be no hope of blisse left for vs . Furthermore, if men praise thee for thy wel liuing, this thy vertue, as it is a vertue, makes thee like vnto Christ: but in as much as it is praised , it makes thee vnlike, who for a rewarde of his vertue, receiued of men the death of the crosse, therefore God (saith the Apostle) exalted him, and gaue him a name which is aboue all names. Therefore it is rather to be wished, to be crucified of the worlde and exalted of God, then to be exalted of the world and condemned of God. The world crucifieth vnto life, God exalteth to glory. The world exalteth to ruine, the Lord iudgeth to hell. To conclude, if the world flatter and fawne vpon thee, it can scarce be that vertue , which altogether erected vpward, ought to haue God onely for to please, doe not encline it selfe somewhat to the plausible fauor of men: and if it loose nothing of his integritie, yet it looseth somewhat of his reward, because when it beginneth to bee performed in earth, where all things are little, the lesse shalbe rendered in heauen, where all things are great. Happie are the reproches that cause safetie, that neither the floure of righteousness wither with the pestiferous winde of vaine glorie, nor the stipende of eternitie be diminished by the vaine applausure of popular fame . Let vs, my sonne, embrace these contumelies , and as seruants of the Lord with a most holy kinde of ambitio. Let vs triumph, but in the ignominie of the crosse of Christ. We preach (saith S. Paul) Christ crucified, to the Hebrewes an offence, to the Gentiles foolishnes, but to vs the vertue & wisdom of God. The wisdom of this world is foolishnes with God, and the foolishnes

nes of Christ is that which ouercommeth the wisdom of the world, by the which it hath pleased God to saue as many as beleue. If thou doubtest not them to be mad which detract thy vertue, and cal Christian life, (that is heauenly wisdom) madnes, remember then how great thy madnes would be, to be seduced from thy determined course in liuing well, by the iudgement of mad men, whereas euery error is to be taken away by correction, not enlarged by imitation. Let them neigh, let them baule, let them barke, goe thou on lustely thy iourney, and weigh by their wickednes how much thou art indebted vnto God, who hath enlightened thee that satest in the shadowe of death, and translated from their companie, who wandered and wallowed here and there out of the way without a guide in most obscure darkenes, hath associated thee with the sonnes of light. Let that most sweete voyce of the Lord alwaies sound in thy eares: *Let the dead burie their dead, follow thou me.* They are dead which liue not to God, and in the time of temporall death most painefully and labouriously purchase to themselues eternall death: of whom if thou demaundest whether they goe, how they apply their endeuors, works and cares, and to conclude, what end they haue prefixed and prescribed to theselues, by the attaining wherof they are become happy, they haue either nothing at al to answere, or els they speak words of repugnance and contrarietie to themselues as it were the dotings of phanatical persons, neither know they what to doe, but according to the maner of them that swim in flouds (by the force of an euill induced custome) they are carried as it were with the rage of a streame: on the one side iniquitie blinding them, on the other side Sathan prouoking them to euill, fall downe headlong into all mischief, being blinde.

blinde guides of the blinde, vntill death vnawares
 take them, and it be said vnto them, Friend, this night
 will they require thy soule of thee, but whose shall
 those things be which thou hast prouided? Then they
 commend those whom they condemned, then they
 praise those whom they despised, and would imitate
 those when they cannot, whom when they might en-
 sue, they had rather pursue. Listen not, my deare
 sonne, to what men shall either say or thinke of thee,
 account it nothing, only view in thy mind the iudge-
 ment of God, which he will geue to euery man accor-
 ding to his workes, in his reuelation from heauen,
 with Angels and powers, taking vengeance on al with
 fiery flames which haue not knowen God, & obeyed
 his Gospell, which (as the Apostle saith) shall bee de-
 stroyed for euer from the face of God, and from the
 glorie of his vertue, when hee shall come to be glori-
 fied in his saints, and to be made wonderfull in all
 them which haue beleueed. It is written, *Feare not him*
which is able to destroy the body, but him which is able to
cast thy soule downe to hell. But how much lesse art thou
 to feare them which are able neither to hurte the bo-
 dy nor soule, who if they now backbite thee gouer-
 ned by reason, they will not the lesse backbite thee, if
 thou shouldest leaue to be vertuous, and come to be
 vicious, not because vice displeaseth them, but be-
 cause the vice of backbiting alwayes pleaseth them.
 Shunne, if thou hast any care of thy soules health,
 shun as much as thou canst their companie, and re-
 turning to thy selfe, often pray thou in secrete vnto
 thy most mercifull father, crying out with the Pro-
 phet, *Vnto thee O Lord haue I lift vp my soule, my God in*
thee doe I trust, I will not be ashamed though mine enemies
mocke me and scorne me, for all that hope and trust in thee
shall not be confounded. Let them be confounded that doe

*wickedly: teach me thy waies, O Lord, and shew me thy paths,
direct me in thy trueth, and teach mee, for thou art God my
Saviour, in thee will I alwaies trust. See also that thou re-
member death to be at hand, and the small time wee
haue to liue, yea lesse then a geometricall poynt: then
how euill that auncient enemy is, which promiseth
vs the kingdomes of the world, that hee might take
from vs the kingdome of heauen: how false pleasures
are which imbrace vs to the end to strangle vs: how
deceitfull are honors, which lift vs vp to cast vs down:
how deadly are riches, which the more they feede vs,
the more they poyson vs: how short, how vncertaine,
how wauering, how false, how fantastike is all that
which all these together had at wish, are able to ac-
complish vnto vs. How great things are promised &
prouided for these, which despising the presents, seek
that Countrey, whose king is Deitie, whose law is cha-
ritie, whose maner is eternitie. With these and such
like cogitations occupie thy minde, which will stirre
thee vp sleeping, kindle thee cooling, confirme thee
staggering, and yeeldeth vnto thee winges of godly
loue, tending to heauen, that when thou shalt come
vnto vs, the which we al expect with earnest desire we
may not only see thee whom we would, but also
such as we would. Farewell, and loue
God, whom thou hast so
begun.*

FINIS.